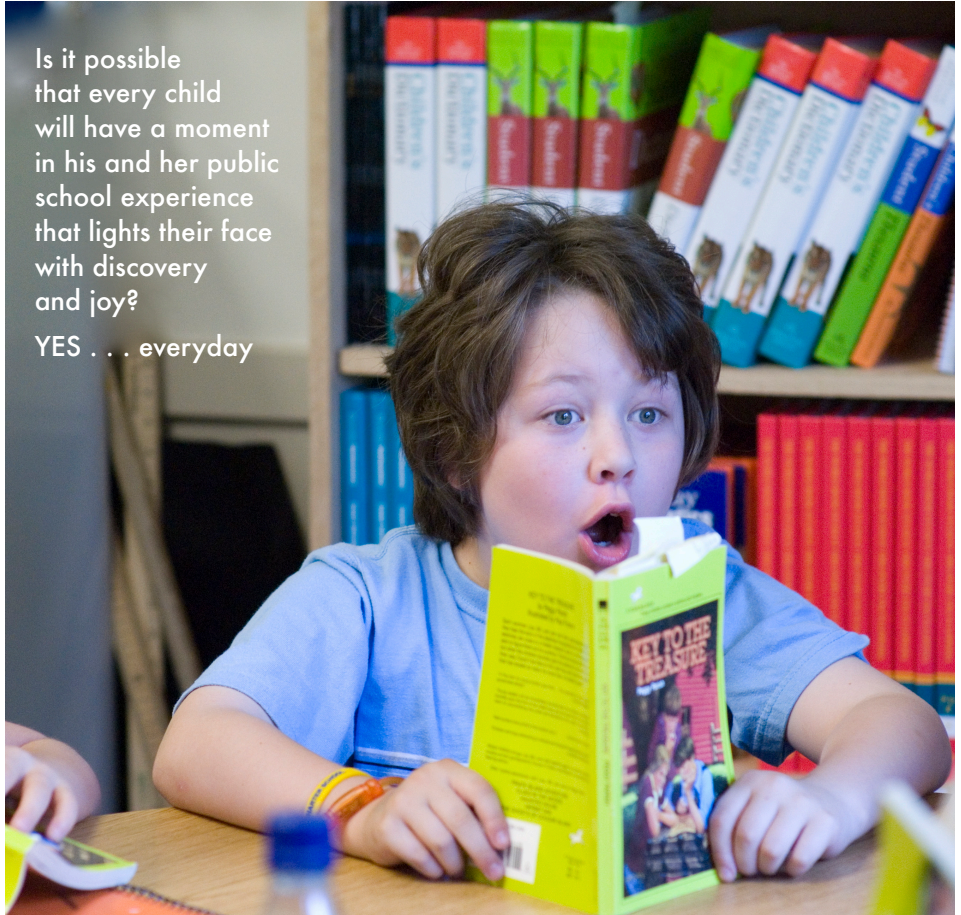


Innovate

Is it possible
that every child
will have a moment
in his and her public
school experience
that lights their face
with discovery
and joy?
YES . . . everyday



NEW HAMPSHIRE INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION 2011



New Hampshire has 10 public charter schools and each one offers innovative ways for our students to meet with success

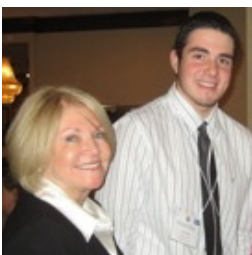
New Hampshire's innovation in meeting the needs of its students through its Charter School Program (CSP) was rewarded in August 2010 when the NH Department of Education was awarded a grant of \$11.6 million to support the start up of more charter schools.

The award was part of a competitive process that highlighted the goals of the charter program. Those goals are:

1. To increase the number of high quality charter schools in the state, particularly those serving educationally disadvantaged students most at risk in rural and urban settings.
2. To use federal CSP grant funds to improve student achievement for secondary charter school students and increase graduation rates.
3. To support the dissemination of charter schools best practices to other public schools and LEAs.

4. To empower charter schools to become strong independent organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.

The Charter School Program provides resources to New Hampshire educators to continue their success in meeting student needs. For example, at Great Bay eLearning, 100% of graduates have been accepted to college. At North Country Charter School, 213 students have graduated since 2004 – 28% of those students had been high school drop outs.



SUCCESS IS . . . helping a young high school dropout named Jamie, who was on probation, to find his way out of a dead end – no high school diploma, no job, no future. It didn't take a miracle, just a public school that was able to engage him in learning. He entered the North Country Charter School in 2009 and is expected to graduate with a high school diploma in 2012.

NH Commissioner of Education Virginia Barry and Jamie speak at a program on drop out prevention.

A letter from

**Virginia Barry
NH Commissioner
of Education**

I am delighted that innovation and school reform have shown such success in our state.

Innovation in education will help lead the way in our priorities. As we face limited resources, it is important that we establish clear priorities to meet the challenges before us. The Department has set four priority areas which are:

- Standards and assessment;
- Data systems to support instruction;
- Great teachers and leaders; and
- Turning around the lowest-achieving schools.

These educational priorities will support an educational system that builds human and social capital necessary for a vibrant New Hampshire economy.

In partnership with non-profit

organizations and school districts, we will achieve school transformation focusing on goals that are not only possible but attainable. For example, New

Hampshire is partnering with other New England states in a New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) focused on transforming high schools. Currently, there is an unprecedented focus on education as the key to the nation's future. New Hampshire's innovative educational initiatives complement the efforts of school districts throughout the state.

The Department is committed to improving instruction and delivery of that instruction in order to support learning and engagement.

Virginia M. Barry

**Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D.
NH Commissioner of Education**



LEARNING: It happens when you care enough to try and are not afraid to fail.

CHARTER SCHOOL QUIZ

or What do you REALLY know about Charter Schools?

1. Charter Schools are private schools only open to those who are accepted.

FALSE: A public charter school is considered a public school. It has an open enrollment. If too many students sign up, a lottery is held for the spaces.

2. Charter schools are free.

TRUE: A charter school is considered a public school and it does not charge tuition. Funding for the school is provided by the state's adequacy funding allocation.

3. We can't afford to build these schools even though the tuition is covered by the state.

FALSE: In most states, public charter schools do not receive capital funds for facilities. Federal legislation provides grants to public charter schools for start-up costs, and often community members form a non-profit group to fundraise within the community to support non-funded development costs.

4. No one is paying attention to these schools that are outside the system. They could be teaching anything!

FALSE: Most public charter schools are granted a charter contract that must be renewed every five years by the State Board of Education. The school's

"charter" is a performance contract outlining its mission, program, goals, targeted students, assessment methods, and academic measurement. If a school doesn't live up to its mission, it can be closed.

5. Charter schools are small, creative places where pioneering educators can try out new education approaches to meet the needs of their student population.

TRUE: In many ways, public charter schools act as the "research & development" arm of public education. They have greater flexibility and tend to attract educators who want to try out new approaches. When proven effective, these new teaching methods can be brought into the larger public school system.



Strong Foundations Charter School's mission: 90% of the students entering in readiness or Grade 1 will be proficient or advanced in reading by the end of Grade 4. Jan. 2011 – mission accomplished.

DRUMROLL PLEASE: THE 10 INNOVATIVE NH CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE . . .

Academy for Science and Design Charter School

Merrimack

The School is designed for 450 students in grades 6-12 who are interested in science, mathematics, engineering and design. In their junior and senior years will be able to specialize in topics such as: engineering, aeronautics and aviation, chemistry and biomedicine, and space, astronomy, and astronautics.

Opened: Sept. 17, 2007

www.asdnh.org

Cocheco Arts and Technology Academy

Dover

The Academy exceeds college-prep secondary education in fundamental academics while providing excellence in performing and fine arts, and technology. It is dedicated to creating an educational community for grades 9-12 where each student thrives by exploring personal interests (majors) in an atmosphere that encompasses different learning styles, individual learning opportunities, smaller class sizes, and multiple methods of learning.

Opened: Jan. 24, 2005

www.cochecoarts.org

CSI Charter School

Penacook

CSI is designed for students in grades 9-12 who are disengaged from their traditional high school and would benefit from an individualized program that meets their needs. The school uses student academic competencies and work-based skills to develop individual plans to allow students to meet essential academic and work-based competencies. The school is very small, student interest centered, and supported by project-based learning and technology.

Opened: July 1, 2007

<http://csi.mv.k12.nh.us>

Great Bay eLearning

Exeter

Using project-based learning and competency-based multiple assessments in a technology-rich environment, students are engaged in learning that links curriculum to their interests. The School serves grades 8-12 and promotes respect for oneself and others in an environment of meaningful connections between students, staff, and learning opportunities. To meet challenging college

and career expectations, students engage in classroom and extended learning opportunities, either online or in other site-based programs. Since it opened, all students have been accepted to at least one post-secondary program/college of their choosing.

Opened: Jan. 3, 2005

www.gbcs.org

Ledyard Charter School

Lebanon

Designed to serve under-performing and/or disengaged students in grades 9 - 12, the school prepares students both academically and socially, in a rigorous academic program that stresses the importance of community and allows students to apply their learning in context. Service learning in the community, internships, and a strong academic core are important parts of the program.

Opened Jan. 2009

www.ledyardcharterschool.net



North Country Charter Academy Littleton & Lancaster

For students in grades 7-12 who can benefit from a non-traditional high school setting, and are, or may be, at risk of dropping out. The Academy enrolls up to 60 students in two centers divided into morning and afternoon sessions. Each session consists of two teachers with a maximum of 15 students. While

credits are earned, activities are structured and competency based at an 80% completion rate. Students also participate in an organized Extended Learning Opportunity activity.

Opened: July 1, 2004

www.northcountrycharteracademy.org

Seacoast Charter School

Kingston

The School is an arts integrated public elementary charter school. It was founded with grades 3-5 in 2004, beginning with 8 students. It has grown to 172 students in



grades 1-8. Plans are in the works for a full day kindergarten in 2011. The School strives to provide excellence in core academics and the arts while cultivating the individual qualities and strengths of each child.

Opened: July 1, 2004

www.seacoastcharterschool.org

Strong Foundations Charter School

Pembroke

The School is designed to develop early literacy in all children including those at risk for reading disabilities, K-8. The founders incorporate Orton-Gillingham instruction and develop children's

phonemic processing skills. The curriculum is a full elementary program with emphasis on increasing the percent of students who reach grade-level or above competency in reading, writing, and math. The school offers all academic subjects, including computer skills. An individual plan is created for each student to develop areas of weakness and strength.

Opened: Sept. 2007

www.strongfoundationsnh.org



Surry Village Charter School

Surry

The K-8 school provides a challenging and rigorous education for children in a environment that emphasizes creativity, collaboration, community, diversity, service and leadership. It is community-oriented with strong academic programs. It teaches children self-sufficiency and brings community members into the school to work with children in the multi-age, multi-grade teaching program.

Opened: Sept. 5, 2006

www.surryvillagecharterschool.org

Virtual Learning Academy

Online

VLACS uses new and emerging distance learning technologies to provide any time, any where access to a rigorous personalized education that helps high school students learn today, graduate tomorrow, and prepare for the future. The flexible scheduling of VLAC's courses meets the needs of non-traditional students as they design alternative learning plans to meet their needs.

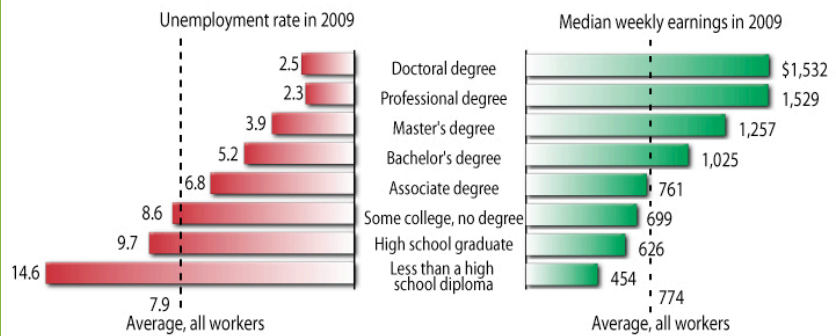
Opened: Jan. 2008

www.vlacs.org

Why Try So Hard to Educate Every Student?

- Reduces unemployment
- Saves money
- Fulfills dreams
- Creates global citizens
- Builds a stronger America

Education pays



TWO VERY DIFFERENT APPROACHES YIELD SUCCESS

Virtual Learning Academy Charter School

The Academy is New Hampshire's first statewide, online high school that is available, free of charge to all high school students in the state.

The Academy uses technology to provide its students with anytime, anywhere access to a rigorous, personalized education that helps them learn today, graduate tomorrow and prepare for the future.

Approximately 60% of the student population is considered at high risk of not finishing high school.

Stories from graduates:

- One student suspended indefinitely from school, was accepted to VLACS, graduated on time, and is now attending Champlain College.
- Another student was a drop-out and teen mother. She graduated and now manages a restaurant in her home town.
- From a parent of a student who had been in and out of group homes and medical treatment facilities: "I can't say enough good things about VLACS and all the teachers, and yourself for working and sticking with us. . ."

In the virtual classroom, every student is in the front row because he or she has one-to-one interaction with the teacher, and is directly accountable for every query, question or exercise.

It is important to note that virtual schools are a complement as well as an alternative to traditional schools, not a replacement.

Academy of Science and Design: A STEM School

ASD is a school and community driven by a passion for learning and education. The school's goal is to instill and nurture that passion in its students and foster their pursuit of their potential. While there is a particular emphasis on mathematics, the sciences, and specific focus areas related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), the overall emphasis is to provide students with a solid educational foundation.

Art and music ensemble and theory are also taught. Short six to eight week seminar courses in focus areas, as well as other areas of student interest, are offered by faculty, parents, and other community members with expertise in a variety of topics as resources permit.

The focus areas are intended to provide students with an opportunity to explore topics earlier than they might under other circumstances.

The charter focus areas include the following:

1. Architecture and Engineering
2. Chemistry and Bio-medicine
3. Space, Astronomy and Astronautics
4. Computer Science, System Design and Simulation
5. Environment and Global Sustainability
6. Mathematics and Physics
7. Aeronautics and Aviation

A VISION FOR HIGH SCHOOL INNOVATION

The New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) envisions every adolescent in Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont graduating from a new generation of high-performing, internationally competitive high schools prepared for success in the colleges, careers, and communities of our global society.

By building equitable systems of public secondary education in each of our states, we envision the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that were once the possession of a few becoming the universal standards for all. Our students will not only be proficient in the traditional academic disciplines, they will be creative thinkers, adaptable workers, and informed citizens equipped to face the diverse challenges of the 21st century.

The NESSC forges ambitious forward-thinking partnerships among states, educational organizations, postsecondary institutions, and schools to leverage resources and expertise in pursuit of our common mission.

The NESSC asks those who are committed to this vision to join a League of Innovative Schools. Go to NEWENGLANDSSC.org to learn more.